
THREE DIALOGUES

ON THE

AMUSEMENTS

OF

CLERGYMEN.

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*Renounce the world, the preacher cries.
We do — a multitude replies.
But one, as innocent regards
A snug, and friendly game at cards.
Another can, whate'er you say,
Perceive no mischief in a play.
Some love a concert, or a race,
And others, shooting, and the chase.
Reviled, yet loved ; renounced, yet followed,
Thus, bit by bit, the world is swallowed.
Each thinks his neighbour makes too free ;
Yet likes a slice as well as he.*

COWPER.

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LONDON:

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ON THE
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WHEN Dr. Josiah Frampton's library was sold in London (in the year 1729 or 1730) his divinity books were classed in seven lots; one of which was purchased by Dr. Edwards. The catalogue of this lot mentioned a parcel of MSS. Among these the Doctor found one in Dr. Frampton's own hand-writing, of which the following is a copy.

September 23, 1686.

I ALWAYS thought it one of the most fortunate circumstances of my life (or rather the most providential, as I ought to call it) that soon after my leaving college, I was led by various, and singular accidents, to the curacy of Wroxal in Warwickshire. Here I met with many civilities from the gentlemen of the country, particularly from Sir Roger Burgoin, who was equally distinguished for his piety, and learning. At his house I frequently saw that truly venerable man, Dr. Edward Stillingfleet, afterwards Bishop of Worcester, but at that time Dean of Paul's. He had been
early

early connected with the Burgoin family, and ever preserved a great intimacy with them ; which he commonly renewed, every year, by a visit of two or three weeks.

What Dr. Stillingfleet saw in me, I know not: but I thought myself very unworthy of the civilities he shewed me. I was certainly, at that time, a very incorrect young man. I had entered into the ministry with little attention to the duties, I had taken on me to discharge. I loved society, and was fond of country diversions: and though I was fond also of my book, I would at any time have

left it for a day's diversion with the hounds—a ramble in the woods with my gun—or a game of cards, and a dance in the evening. Such as I was however Dr. Stillingfleet was particularly obliging to me; and friendly enough to give me a hint, now and then, with regard to my conduct, which, I hope I may with truth say, was not lost upon me.—An opportunity however occurred, which enabled me to receive more than *casual* advantage from his conversation.

During one of his annual visits to the Burgoin family, he was seized with a violent fit of the gout, to which

his

his latter years were very subject. It happened at this critical time, that Sir Roger Burgoin and his lady were called into Worcestershire to attend their mother, who lay at the point of death: and as the Dean expressed a desire for my company, in their absence, I gave him as much of it, as I could; following not more his desire, than my own inclination. He was at that time engaged in correcting his *Origines Sacrae** for a new edition; and had brought

* This very learned work was written, when Stillingfleet was under thirty years of age. A story is told of his having been put to the blush by Bishop Saunderson, his diocesan; who

brought down with him several Latin books to consult. As I could read that language with accuracy enough, I was of some little use to him. While I read, he noted with his pen the passages he wanted. The intervals were filled with conversation.

We were sitting together, one day, after dinner; and the Dean laying up his feet on a cushion, and being tolerably free from pain, began

seeing a young man at his visitation, of the name of Stillingfleet, and not knowing his person, asked him, whether he were related to the great Stillingfleet, who wrote the *Origines Sacre*?

to

to rally me a little on my attachment to country diversions—a subject he had often before casually introduced; and on which he knew I had a weak side. I had brought him two young partridges that day for his dinner; and he began by expressing his obligations to me for my attention to him; and then asked me some question, which led me to give him an account of my day's exploits. I did not see his drift; and in the spirit of a sportsman, told him, that the late rainy season had made game very scarce—that the two covies, from which I had shot the brace I had brought to him, were the only birds

I had seen the whole day, though I had been out from five in the morning till twelve at noon; and had walked upwards of fifteen miles.

Well, said the Dean, with an affected gravity of countenance, I only wished to know the extent of my obligation to you; and I find your philanthropy has done more for me in giving me seven hours of your time to procure me a dinner, than I could have done, (even were I as able to walk as you are) for any man in Christendom.

From being a little jocular, he became,

became, by degrees, serious. I have often thought, said he, Mr. Frampton, (and I know your candor will excuse me) that the clergy have rather injured the respectability of their characters by mixing too much with the amusements of laymen. They not only get into a trifling way of spending their time; but by making themselves cheap, they diminish the weight of their instructions; and often give a sort of sanction by their presence to gaieties, which were better checked. It is a common speech in the mouths of licentious people, that they must be right, because they have gotten the parson along with them.—Indeed a clergyman cannot be too cautious with regard

gard to his character. It is a matter of the greatest delicacy, and easily sullied. If he act contrary to it, he always has a consciousness about him, which makes him jealous of every eye: and when he becomes hardened, he is among the most contemptible of mankind.—You will easily however understand, that when I restrict the clergyman from joining too freely with the amusements of the laity, I am equally hurt with every appearance of haughtiness, and moroseness. If the character of the clergyman is not marked with modesty, and humility, it is bereft of its most distinguished graces.

But,

But, said I, Sir, may not example work the other way; and the presence of a grave clergyman be a check upon licentiousness?

Sometimes, said he, it may: and when a clergyman mixes in improper company *with this view*, and is conscious of his own powers of control, he imitates that bright example, which sorteth with *publicans, and sinners*. A very respectable clergyman, a friend of mine, having heard that a favourite youth had been decoyed by bad company into a disreputable house, went thither himself; and pretending business with the young man,

fat

sat down on a slight invitation, among a set of debauchees, trusting his character to its credit. He was a man of severe aspect, strong sense, and ready expression; and therefore well fitted for the office he undertook. For awhile he overawed, by the suddenness of his appearance, the vice and folly he was mixed with. But well knowing, that in a little time the impression he made, would go off, and he might be liable to affronts, he retired, before the company could rally their impudence; and carried off with him his young friend; who would frequently declare afterwards, that he believed this very circumstance brought

brought him more to recollection, than any event of his life ; and perhaps saved him from ruin.—But now, my dear Sir, though I have accommodated your argument with an example, I must add, that I think the accommodation gives it little support. I fear the *motive exemplified here* has little weight in the common intercourse between the clergy, and laity.

But may not this intercourse, said I, Sir, though without any *direct view* of leading out of *immediate mischief*, still have its use ? Even the presence of a respectable clergyman, I should think, might often be a happy restraint.

Why,

Why, yes, answered the Dean; but then, my good friend, you will consider, that a *young* clergyman can rarely act this part. Years are necessary to give respectability to *this mode* of instructive intercourse. Natural talents too, which few people possess, are necessary. A man of morose character may perhaps be of service with his pen in his closet; but, however pious, and well-meaning, he will hardly be of much use in any of the scenes of common life. If again, we avoid moroseness by assuming the colour of our company (which must, in a degree, always be done, when we wish to reform in this way), I fear, instead of doing good, we shall do harm.

But

But it is a difficult matter, said I, Sir, especially for a young man, to preserve those exact bounds of intercourse, which his character may require. When he enters first into the world, and is taken notice of by those, who are in a station above him, it is hardly possible for him to resist the importunities he meets with to enter into various amusements; to drink his glass freely; or make one in parties, which in fact perhaps he may not approve.

No doubt, said the Dean, it may be difficult. But do you believe that when God placed you in a state of trial,

trial, he meant that you should live without difficulties? The whole of life is a conflict: and if we do not begin early to brace on our moral armour, and accustom ourselves to it, when are we to enter the field?—I should hope it is for want of consideration, more than any thing else, that so many young clergymen err in this matter. I could wish them to fix in their own minds certain bounds to their amusements, and remember the poet's caution,

Quos ultra, citraque, nequit consistere rectum.

Aye, Sir, said I, these *certi fines*—

this narrow path between the *citra*, and the *ultra*, I have often in vain endeavoured to pursue. And if you can give me any instruction to guide my footsteps better through the amusements of life, than they have hitherto been conducted, I shall kindly receive them, and lay them up in a grateful memory.

It is very probable, my dear Sir, said the Dean, that my rules may be stricter, than you would wish to comply with. I have thought often on the subject lately for the sake of a young clergyman, in whose well-doing I was

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much

much interested: but I had not all the success I hoped for.

I assured the Déan, I should endeavour to be a more observant disciple. I did indeed spend a considerable part of my time in amusements of various kinds; but I was hopeful, that my errors proceeded more from inattention (the apology he was pleased to furnish) than from any bad disposition.

The good Dean was pleased to say, he believed me; and added some other friendly expressions, which not
being

being to our present purpose, I omit. He then asked me, what was my idea of an amusement; or how I should define it?

This was a puzzling question to one, who had trespassed so much on this head; and who having never thought much on the subject, seldom had any end, but barely to please himself. I *could* have given him a definition of amusement; but I was afraid of bringing my own practice too much within its censure. To gain therefore a little time for reflection, I asked, Whether he meant *amusement*

in general, or confined the question to the *amusements of clergymen*?

Why, truly, said the Dean, the amusements of all people require regulation enough. But my question, at present, relates only to the *amusements of the clergy*.

I answered, that I thought *bodily exercise* was one end; and as to the *amusement* of the mind, I thought its only end was to relax, and fit it the better for study.

Your definition, said the Dean, is
so

so far good : but it does not go far enough. It considers only the *purpose* of amusement : whereas it should also take in the *quality*. You will allow, I suppose, that the clerical amusement should be suited to the clerical profession ?

I allowed it certainly.

Well, then, said the Dean, we have now, I think, obtained a full definition of *clerical amusement*. It should intend the *exercise of the body, and the recreation of the mind* ; but it should also be *suitd to the genius of the profession*. As the first member however of this de-

finition relates to amusement in general; and applies as well *ad populum*, as *ad clerum*, we will, if you please, pass it over at present. If we can establish the second part, I hope there will be no great danger of mistaking the first. I shall only therefore endeavour to shew you, that all *clerical amusements* should be suited to the *clerical profession*.—Now in order to throw the best light on this subject, I should wish to consider amusements under the three heads of *riotous and cruel*—of *trifling and seducing*—and lastly, of *innocent, and instructive*: for I think it very possible, that an amusement may be characterized with both
these

these epithets, though either may be sufficient. Are these heads, added he, comprehensive enough to include all kinds of amusement? Or do you recollect any other?

I thought them sufficiently comprehensive.

Well, then, said the Dean, we will begin with such amusements as are *riotous*, and *cruel*: and among these I should be inclined to assign the first rank to *hunting*. It is an unfeeling exercise, derived from our savage ancestors, who hunted at first for *food*, and consigned the barbarous practice

to their posterity for *pastime*. Its giving birth to forest laws, and game laws—its injuring corn-lands, and destroying fences—its setting squires, and their tenants; gentlemen, and their neighbours, at variance—its consuming the forage of a country in breeding destructive, or useless animals in the room of such as are really useful—the riotous uproar of the chase, so opposite to the mild serenity, which should characterize the clergyman—and the noisy, intemperate evening, to which it often leads; add such an accumulation of mischief to hunting, that I should be sorry any clergyman should give his countenance to it.—To
this

this we may add the cruelty exercised both on the animals, that pursue, and the animals, that are pursued—the horse pushed to the last extremity—the hound trained to the chase with savage barbarity *—and the wretched fugitive agonizing in the extremity of distress.

But there is still a greater mischief, which often attends these riotous amusements. When the squire hunts

* ————— At his foot

The spaniel dying for some venial fault,
Under dissection of the knotted scourge.

COWPER.

with

with his neighbours, he introduces no more corruption into the parish than he found. But I have sometimes known annual hunts established in sporting countries, which draw together hundreds of profligate people from different parts, who call themselves *gentlemen*, but are really *pests* of the neighbourhood, to which they resort; introducing new vices into the villages, and every kind of debauchery. Their servants, who are commonly of the same stamp, spread the corruption among the peasants, and servant-girls, which their masters spread among the farmers' sons, and daughters.—The clergyman, who
mixes

mixes in such scenes, is far out of sight of the bare decency of his profession.

But pray, Sir, said I, may not some little plea be offered in favour of hunting? Is it not a manly exercise? Does it not furnish our tables with food; and rid the country of noxious animals?

I beseech you, said the Dean, do not call in argument to defend a pastime, which has no alliance with reason. Call it a wild passion—a brutal propensity—or any thing that indicates its nature. But to give it any connection

nection with reason, is making a union between black and white.—But it is *manly* forsooth to hunt. *Manliness*, I should suppose, implies some mode of action, that *becomes a man*. Hunting might formerly, for aught I know, have been a manly exercise, when the country was overrun with boars, and wolves, and it was a *public service* to extirpate them. But to honour with the name of *manliness* the cruel practice of pursuing timid animals to put them to death merely for *amusement*, is, in my opinion, perverting the meaning of words. There are many ways surely of using manly exercise, at least as healthful—and far more innocent, and

and less expensive, and dangerous, than galloping over hedges, gates, and ditches. If the *manliness* of the action lie in the risk you run of breaking your neck, for no end, it would still be greater manliness to jump down a precipice.—The fox-hunter, I doubt not, would ridicule the man, who runs about with a hand-net, hunting a butterfly : but I protest, I see not for what reason. The exercise of the butterfly-hunter is as good; and the pleasure of the chase is, to him at least, equal.—But you alledge, that hunting supplies the table with food. I dare say, Sir Roger's game-keeper will tell you, he could supply it better
in

in many other ways. I have certainly no objection to take the lives of animals for food; and grant, that if they were suffered to multiply, they would become noxious. What I mean is, that I cannot allow turning the *destruction* of them into an *amusement*—and least of all into a *clerical amusement*.—I knew a gentleman, who took great delight in knocking down an ox; which he performed with much dexterity: and it was his common amusement to go among the butchers on a slaughtering-day, and give two or three of them a shilling a-piece, to let him be their substitute in that operation. You call such a man a brute: and he surely

was one. But you would find it difficult to shew, that the circumstance of riding on a horse, and bawling after a pack of dogs, makes the amusement less brutal.

Surely, said I, Sir, there is a difference between the pleasure of a pursuit; and a pleasure, which consists merely in the act of inflicting death?

Why, yes, answered the Dean, there is a difference; but I know not, on which side of it the advantage lies. If hunting be a more *genteel* species of butchery, it is certainly a more *cruel* one. The ox receives its death
by

by an instant stroke ; whereas the hare is first thrown into convulsions of terror, for four or five hours together ; and then seized, in the midst of its agony, and torn piece-meal by a pack of ravenous blood-hounds *.—As to your last argument, that hunting rids the country of noxious animals, I apprehend you are mistaken in the fact. I rather think it tends to replenish the country with them. As one instance at least I can testify, that I

* —————Detested sport,

That owes its pleasure to another's pain !

That feeds upon the sobs, and dying shrieks
Of harmless nature !—————

COWPER.

offended

offended a whole club of sporting neighbours in a manner, that was hardly ever to be gotten over, by giving a man half-a-crown for killing a fox, which had thinned my poultry-yard. And I dare say, there is not a hunting squire in the country, who would not, at any time, give up a dozen of his tenant's lambs, to save half the number of foxes' cubs. Nay, I have often known covers of considerable extent, left purposely in fields, or perhaps planted, merely to decoy foxes into a neighbourhood by providing a proper shelter for them.—But you have provoked me to say all this by aiming to establish an alliance between

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hunting

hunting and rationality. I intended not to disturb the squire either in his riotous day, or his roaring night. I consider *his* malady, as a surgeon does a mortification, which has seized the vitals—beyond all hope of recovery. What I mean, is only to admonish the clergyman not to follow his example.

It is but just however to say, that examples to warn him might also be found in our own profession. I remember a clergyman in a neighbourhood, where I once lived, who had two benefices ; but he spent little time at either of them, because neither
hap-

happened to be in a sporting country. The hunting-season he always spent near a squire in the parish next to mine, whose disciplined pack was famous. With this gentleman, and his hounds, he lived on terms of the greatest intimacy. Indeed both the squire and his dogs looked up to him, as their ablest leader. Though he was a miserable preacher, he was uncommonly musical in the field; and could cheer, and animate his sonorous friends with an eloquence beyond the huntsman himself, whose associate he always was, and whose place, on any emergency, he could amply supply. He was much readier at finding a hare, than

a text of scripture ; and though he was scarce acquainted with the face of one of his parishioners, he knew exactly the character of every hound in the squire's pack ; and could run over their names with much more readiness, than those of the twelve apostles*. He had at length the misfortune to break his neck at the end of a

* Oh laugh, or mourn with me, the rueful jest,
A cassock'd huntsman!——

He takes the field ; the master of the pack
Cries, Well done, Saint—and claps him on the
back.

Is this the path of sanctity ? Is this
To stand a way-mark in the road to bliss ?

COWPER.

fox-

fox-chase; but not till he had first broken the heart of a very amiable woman, who had unhappily connected herself with him.

Such a clergyman, said I, is hardly to be paralleled in a century. But in an inferior degree, I fear, there are many of our brethren, who allow themselves great indulgence. I remember a hunting-clergyman, who received a very proper rebuke from one of his brethren; and which I have reason to believe was of service to him, as long as he lived. He had been lamenting his unfortunate lot, in being stationed in a country, where

there was no hunting. The other looking him full in the face, said with great gravity of countenance, and in a deliberate tone of voice; "At the great day of accounts, the question will not be, *where* have you lived; but *how* have you lived?"—All this however is carrying amusement to excess. But suppose, Sir, when you are riding out, you happen to hear the hounds, is there any harm merely in taking a little exercise with them, if you do not join in the riot of the chase?

I hate, said the Dean, to see a man do any thing by halves. Is it right,
or

or is it wrong? If it be right, do it boldly. If it be wrong, turn your horse another way, and take your exercise in a contrary direction. Never go to the edge of a precipice. You can hardly help going a little farther than you intended. I remember hearing a story of a clergyman, who was not remarkable for neglecting, at least the outward part of his duty; but once unhappily forgot it through his love for hunting. He was eagerly engaged in a fox-chase, when the fox *took to earth*, as they call it: on which he cried out, "Gentlemen, I
" must leave you: This puts me in
" mind, that I have a corpse to bury

“ at four o’clock this evening ; and I
“ fear I shall be an hour too late.”—

Besides, continued the Dean, you cannot well avoid, in this field of riot, at least if you are often seen in it, making an acquaintance with several, to whom, for your character’s sake, you would not wish to be known.—

But indeed, as I observed, to mix, in any degree, in these scenes of cruelty, and riotous exultation, is unbecoming the clerical profession.—

Farther still, (to close my argument with scripture) I should wish you to consider, that as many good people, as well as I, disapprove a clergyman’s mixing in these riotous amusements,

so

so of course it will give offence to all these good people. No man therefore, who has the honour of his profession at heart, would give offence, where the matter in question is of so little consequence as a mere amusement. Let him consider how strict St. Paul was in matters of this kind. St. Paul's example is certainly not very fashionable ; but with a clergyman, I should hope it might have some weight. He gives us many hints, which come home to the point, we are now discussing. Hunting was out of the question. He would not certainly have permitted Timothy, or Titus to hunt, if they had been so
dis-

disposed. But he forbids us to give offence in matters, that are of much more concern, than mere amusement. *If meat, says he, make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh, while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend.*

I told the good Dean, he had silenced me. I was afraid my love for the diversion had been founded rather on inclination, than argument. But nobody again, I hoped, should ever *take offence* at my following a pack of hounds.—But pray, said I, Sir, do you allow shooting? It is a much less riotous amusement; nay, it may even be a solitary one.

To

To speak plainly, replied the Dean,
I cordially allow no *amusement* to a
clergyman that has any thing to do
with *shedding blood*.—Besides, I think
a peculiar cruelty attends this diver-
sion. You may wound, and maim,
as well as kill. My *heart*, I am sure,
would be strongly affected—indeed,
even my *conscience*—if I should make
a poor animal miserable all the days
of its life, for the sake of giving my-
self a momentary amusement.—It
was but the last autumn, when riding
down a lane, I saw two poor miserable
partridges—both bleeding, and one
trailing a shattered leg after it—flut-
tering, and running before me. Poor
wretches,

wretches, said I, I wish the person, who put you into this miserable situation, may never feel the distress he has occasioned ! I then ordered my servant to dismount, and run after them. The lame one he caught; the other crawled into a hedge, where it probably lingered out its miserable life a few days longer.

But the expert marksman, I told the Dean, never shoots among a convey, but takes his aim at a single bird.

And are all shooters, said he, *expert marksmen*? And does the expert marksman

marksman himself never maim the bird he aims at, or the bird, that is near it? Often, I have no doubt, he maims both.—To repel the attack of a bird, or beast of prey, I have certainly no objection; nor to take the life of an animal for food; though I should not wish to make a clergyman the butcher, whether an ox, or a partridge is to be slaughtered. But to take the life of an animal, except in one, or the other of these cases, I hold to be absolutely immoral. And I think it is no better to run the risk of maiming it, and making it miserable for life. The most humane way therefore is to take birds with a net,

which allows you to discharge such as you wish, and put to a speedy death those you take for food.

But to take birds in a net, said I, Sir, is not at all in the spirit of sportsmen.—Besides, there are some species of game, as pheasants particularly, which cannot be taken in nets.

Do not tell me, replied the Dean, of the *spirit of sportsmen*. Though the ties of humanity, no doubt, equally bind them; yet to such hopeless hearers I should no more attempt to preach, than I should to their spaniels.—Nor do I pretend to know, what

what kind of game may be taken in one way, and what in another: though I have no doubt, but my friend Robert* could inform me, how pheasants might be taken without shooting them. But what I labour at chiefly is to convince such sober-minded clergymen, as I conceive you to be, that every species of bloody, and cruel amusement is unsuitable to the genius, and temper of a Christian divine; and enters more by habit into a character, than is commonly supposed. It is under the idea of tainting a character with professional

* Sir Roger's game keeper.

habits,

habits, that the butcher is prohibited from serving on a jury.

For myself, Sir, I replied, I am on'y ashamed, that from the dictates of my own reason I have not sooner acknowledged the truths you set before me. I always had my doubts: but not supposing amusements of this kind to be *sinful*, and not conceiving them to be *improper*, from the eagerness, with which numbers of my elder brethren pursue them, I stifled my own suggestions. But in my present sentiments I believe I shall never fire a gun again for my diversion, at any kind of game.

To

To assist your good resolutions, said the Dean, I can suggest two, or three other considerations, which are worth the attention of a clergyman. He can scarce be settled in any place, in which he will not find the squire of his parish attached violently to his game; and jealous of every man, who interferes with him in this great point. He is especially jealous of the clergyman, whom he considers as an interloper. I have known many clergymen get into silly squabbles on this score; and by making themselves obnoxious to the squire, render themselves much less able to be of service in their parishes. On many occa-

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sions

sions the squire's countenance may be of great use to the clergyman in managing his parochial affairs : and it is highly imprudent to lose his assistance for a trifle.

I once, said I, experienced this inconvenience myself. But I had the discretion, when I found I had raised a jealousy, immediately to desist. At present, I have free permission from Sir Roger, and two or three other gentlemen of the country, to range their domains, when I please : So that I lay down my arms in the plenitude of my power.

I should wish still farther to suggest
to

to you, continued the Dean, that if any mischance, in these violent exercises, should happen to a clergyman, it tells much worse, than when it happens to another person. How oddly would it sound, if the parish were told, on a Sunday there could be no service, because the parson had put out his shoulder, the day before, by a fall at a fox-chase? If a clergyman lose a hand, or an eye in shooting, as is sometimes the case, I have generally found the commiseration of people, mixed with a certain degree of contempt. If he had been about his business, they would say, it would not have happened.—The commission also

of an accidental mischief, in these unclerical amusements, will always be more distressing, at least it ought, to a clergyman, than to a layman.—Poor Archbishop Abbot was a melancholy instance. He was exemplary in many points, but unhappily indulged himself in the amusement of shooting; and as he was taking this exercise in a park belonging to Lord Zouch in Hampshire, he had the misfortune to shoot one of the keepers. After this event, he never recovered his cheerfulness; and party running high, it gave his enemies a great handle against him. It was brought as a question, whether he could ever again officiate as an arch-

archbishop. After a long inquiry, it was determined, that he must be degraded, but that the king might again restore him; which was accordingly done.—I could point out a prelate of these days *, who does his character no service by being a sportsman. Formerly he kept a pack of hounds; but has had the decency, since he obtained a mitre, to dismiss them. He is still however his own game-keeper; and is so expert, that he wants no assistance in furnishing his table with every article of game. Archbishop Abbot's misfortune reminds me of a

* About the beginning of James II.

similar accident, of which this prelate had nearly been the occasion. A young lady, who lived near him, was riding quietly along a close lane, when a gun went off, on the other side of the hedge, close to her horse's ear. The beast took fright—started violently aside—and threw her; though providentially she was not hurt. While her servant was following her horse, she walked gently up the lane; and coming to an opening in the hedge, the bishop, in all his shooting accoutrements, presented himself. He made his apology, and hoped she was not hurt. She thanked him for his kind enquiry: but said, she should

have been better pleased, if it had been needless.

I told the Dean, I remembered something of the story, about two years ago, in the public prints.

Yes, said the Dean, she was an arch girl, and inserted it in a very ludicrous manner; making a laughable contrast between the bishop's sporting attire, and his lawn sleeves, and other episcopal habiliments*.

Well,

* Dr. Johnson's profound reverence for the hierarchy made him expect from bishops the highest degree of decorum. There are

Well, Sir, said I, I hope these examples will prove sufficient cautions to me, though I am sorry to receive them from such exalted characters.— I should wish you however to believe, that I am an enemy to cruelty in all shapes ;

gradations, he said, in conduct : there is morality—decency—propriety. None of these should be violated by a bishop. When a bishop places himself in a situation, where he has no distinct character, and is of no consequence, he degrades the dignity of his order. Nor was it only in the dignitaries of the church that Dr. Johnson required a particular decorum, and delicacy of behaviour ; he justly considered, that the clergy, as persons set apart for the sacred office of serving at the altar, and impress-
ing

shapes; and do not remember, that I ever wantonly took the life of the meanest reptile.

We certainly, said the Dean, have no right. When a spider takes possession

ing the minds of men with the awful concerns of a future state, should be somewhat more serious than the generality of mankind; and have a suitable composure of manners. A due sense of the dignity of their profession, independent of higher motives, will ever prevent them from losing their distinction in an indiscriminate sociality: and did such as affect this, know how much it lessens them in the eyes of those, whom they think to please by it, they would feel themselves much mortified.

Boswell's Life of Johnson, vol. iii. p. 32.

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of my house, or a snail of my garden, I make no scruple to destroy them. They are invaders. But if I meet with either of them in the fields, I should think myself the invader, if I disturbed them. If a wolf attempt to seize a lamb, which is my property, and under my protection, I think his life should pay the forfeit. But if he can seize an antelope, or any other wild animal, with which I have no concern, I have no authority to interfere. He has the same deed of gift to alledge for seizing his prey, which I have for the beef, or mutton I buy in the market. And yet I know not, whether I should not put him to death,

death, wherever I found him, as a proscribed villain; as always acting under at least a tacit declaration of war against me. If I were not well assured, he would attack me, when he could, I am persuaded, I should never molest him.—Man regulates his actions towards his *fellow-men* by *laws, and customs*. But certainly there are laws also to be observed between man, and beast, which are equally coercive, though the injured party has no power of appeal.

I fully accede, said I, Sir, to your code of criminal law between man, and beast. It is certainly power, not right,

right, that we appeal to, in wantonly disposing of the lives of animals. And what surprises me the more, is, we often see this wanton breach of natural law in men of humanity. An acquaintance of mine, who is as ready as any man to do a good-natured action, will stand whole mornings by the side of a bridge, shooting swallows, as they thread the arch, and flit past him. He is however no clergyman.

Let him be what he will, said the Dean, his profession has been mistaken, and he ought to have been bred a butcher. I can have no conception
of

of the humanity of a man, who can find his amusement in destroying the happiness of a number of little innocent creatures, sporting themselves, during their short summer, in skimming about the air; and without doing injury of any kind, pursuing only their own little happy excursions, and catching the food, which Providence has allotted them.—But I have seen instances enough of this kind of cruelty to remove all surprise. More offence from such despotism I never remember to have taken, than, about five or six years ago, in a little voyage I made into the Irish sea. A nephew of mine, the captain of a cruizer, whom

whom you saw here last summer, was then lying at Milford-haven; and, being about to take the voyage I have mentioned, was desirous to carry me with him, as I had expressed an inclination to see the wonderful rocky barrier, which nature had formed against the ocean, along many of the coasts of Wales. As we drew near a promontory, where the rocks were lofty, we found them inhabited by thousands of sea-fowl of different kinds, which at that season frequent them. I was greatly amused with seeing the variety of their busy actions, and different modes of flight; and with hearing the harsh notes of each,

each, when single; and their varied tones, changed into a sort of wild harmony, by the clangor of all together. One should have thought a colony, like this, might have been safe from all annoy. They are useless when dead—and harmless when alive. —We saw however, as we proceeded, two or three boats anchoring at different distances, in which were certain *savages*—I can call them by no other name—diverting themselves with shooting at these poor birds, as they flew from their nests, or returned to them with food from the sea; destroying not only the parent-birds, but leaving the helpless progeny to
clamour

clamour in vain for food, and die of hunger. This mode of taking life for no end, is a species of cruelty, which I should wish to brand with the severest name; and should almost detest a clergyman, who should find his amusement in it.

I must allow, said I, Sir, that what you have said against hunting, and shooting, hath entirely convinced me of the impropriety of both, as clerical amusements.—You have said nothing however against fishing. Do you allow me to suppose, this amusement to be a clerical one? It is silent, quiet, and may be contemplative.

I am

I am afraid, replied the Dean, I shall be thought too rigid if I abridge a clergyman of this amusement. Only I absolutely enjoin him not to impale worms on his hook ; but to fish either with an artificial fly or a dead bait. If he like fishing with a net, I approve it more : but still I cannot bring myself to *recommend* any *amusement* to him, which arises from *destroying life*.

But, said I, Sir, fishing seems to have scriptural authority. Many of the apostles were fishermen ; and our Saviour himself bids Peter *cast his hook into the sea*.

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Why

Why yes, answered the Dean ; but I doubt whether we get much from these authorities. Fishing, you know, was the occupation of several of the apostles : they fished with nets for a livelihood : and St. Peter, you will remember, did not *cast his hook into the sea* for his *amusement*. However, you find I am not very rigid on this head.—Indeed all I have said about taking the lives of animals amounts only to this—that we have no right to do it except for food, or to get rid of a nuisance—and that when we are obliged to take life, we should always take it in the easiest manner. All this appears to me so much the dic-
tate

tate of nature, and truth, that no man can controvert it *in reason*, whatever he may do *in practice*. But the clergyman is under the still stricter ties of decency, and respect to his character.

But have not you, Sir, said I, confined within too strict a limit the power of man over the lives of animals? Are there not other reasons, besides obtaining food, and the removal of a nuisance, which may make the exercise of that power lawful? May we not take the whale for his oil, and the beaver for his fur?

I allow it, said the Dean. Where

the uses of man preponderate, his right over the animal seems just. But perhaps greater liberty may be commonly taken in this matter, than my code will allow. If the use be trivial, I reject the claim. I permit you to take the whale for his oil; but I should not readily grant you leave to destroy the elephant for his tooth.

I told the Dean, I saw the difference very plainly. But, said I, Sir, do you allow the philosopher to take life in making his researches into nature? in examining the wonders of the microscope; in tracing the circulation of the blood; in discovering the properties

ties of air ; and in other things, which tend to advance human knowledge, and often serve some great end of utility ?

This question, said the Dean, is rather more difficult. What promotes human knowledge, or serves any essential purpose of utility, is certainly of more consequence, than the life of an animal : and I give you liberty to take it, when you are sure your motive is good. But I should interdict this privilege to mere *curiosity*. We may believe, on the credit of others, that the blood circulates ;

or that an animal will die in an exhausted receiver.

I then asked the Dean, if he did not think, on the other hand, that we might carry our tenderness in taking life too far? I have frequently, said I, deserted a path I wished to walk in, because I have found it pre-occupied by a train of ants, which it hurt me to crush. And yet I have sometimes thought my caution unnecessary.

No doubt, replied the Dean, every virtue has its extremes—its *ultra* (as we just observed) as well as its *citra*.

I have

I have often seen this tenderness in taking life carried to a ridiculous length, if we can call any thing ridiculous, that is founded on an amiable principle. I knew a humane man, who would not suffer a mouse to be taken in a snap-trap. He allowed it to be taken alive; but he took care to have it carried to a distance into the fields, and there set at liberty. He would not destroy a spider, though he made no scruple to sweep away its web. My dear Sir, I once said to him, *your tender mercies are cruel.* It would certainly be more merciful to dispatch these poor animals at once, than to make them misera-

ble by turning them adrift, or leaving them to a languishing death by taking from them their means of subsistence. All this therefore seems to me absurd. It is making the lives of animals of more consequence than they should be. It is making a man miserable for the sake of a mite. For if we carry this tenderness as far as it will fairly go, we ought neither to eat a plum, nor taste a drop of vinegar. It is not size, which gives value to life. The insect, that forms the blue of a plum, or that frisks in a drop of vinegar, has certainly the same claim to exist, as a spider, or a mouse. And how far life extends,



extends, we know not; so that our tenderness in this respect, if indulged to excess, might be endless. Like Indian Bramins, we should not dare to lie down, or set a foot to the ground, without examining every footstep with microscopical exactness. But as these little swarms of nature interfere thus with all the concerns of men, it is plain, that Providence does not lay much stress on their lives. All therefore that seems required, in these cases, is to abstain from wanton injury.—I would not however have you always take the measure of a man's virtue by the extraordinary tenderness of his feelings. I knew a gentleman,
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so extremely tender towards the lives of animals, that when an earwig crept out of a log of wood, which had been laid on his fire, he forbade any more logs to be taken from that pile, and left it to rot. Yet this very man, with all these nice feelings about him, lived avowedly in a state of adultery. Such tenderness therefore may, or may not, be allied to virtue—certainly not necessarily so allied. It is founded merely in nature. But when *any one* affection of the mind is regulated by a *religious principle*, there is in that mind a *controlling power*, which regulates *other* affections. Thus if we abstain from cruelty on a *religious principle*,
we

we may depend on that *principle* on other occasions. As to these *delicate feelings*, they seldom reach beyond their *immediate object*.—Here the Dean made a pause, and after a little recollection, said, he thought we had now run over all the *riotous*, and *cruel* amusements, which he could recollect. As for *cock-fighting*, and *horse-racing*, he added, they are such gambling diversions, that I conceive no clergyman would even be present at the former; nor enter into the spirit of the latter. The race-ground is a wide field, and if he ever enter it for curiosity, he will not only avoid the deep concerns, and commerce of the

9 place,

place, if I may so phrase it; but will also keep entirely aloof from the noise, and bustle, and clamour of the scene. A friend of mine lived on the confines of a celebrated race-ground. He was fond of horses, merely as beautiful objects, which he liked to see in their various motions: and as people are generally well mounted at a race, and much agitated, he used to gratify his curiosity by walking out in an evening, about the time the race was over; and would get behind some hedge, where unseen he had a good view of the company returning from their sport over a fair plain. This was to him the only amuse-

amusement of a race ; and he would say, he believed he had more pleasure from the sober enjoyment of this moving picture, than any one could feel, who entered into the wild joy, and jollity of the scene.

Here our conversation ended at that time. The good Dean complaining, that his feet grew a little troublesome, rang for his servant to change his posture ; and I thinking myself in the way, wished him a good night.

END OF THE FIRST DIALOGUE.

SECOND

I thought they deserved to be assaulted.

I know not, said I, Sir, whether I thought quite so ill of them. I have always been accustomed to think, that moderately used, they were an innocent amusement even for a clergyman.

But pray, said the Dean, in examining the propriety or impropriety, the innocence, or guilt, of an action, are you to consider, how it affects yourself alone ; or how it affects the public in general ?

No

No doubt, I replied, a public-spirited man will consider his actions in reference to the public.

He certainly ought, said the Dean; and this being allowed, do not you consider the present rage for card-playing, through all ranks of people, as a public evil?

I replied, it was, no doubt, an amusement much abused: but the abuse, I thought, lay only at the door of the abuser. Meat, and drink, were abused—dress was abused—the Bible itself was abused: but we must have these things notwithstanding.

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Aye,

Aye, there, returned the Dean, you point out the true distinction. You answer yourself. We *must* have the one; but *need not* have the other. Does it follow, because we *must* have meat, and drink, though they are abused, that we must necessarily have cards also?——If then cards be allowed to be a public evil; and we are, at the same time, under *no necessity* to have them, every conscientious man would give up a thing so trifling (as an amusement, at best, is) to avert that evil: and by refraining, he certainly does avert it, as far as his own influence, and example reach.

You

You do not mean, said I, Sir, that cards are in themselves essentially bad?

Why, no, said he. Cards *in themselves* may afford as innocent amusement as any thing else. And yet I know not whether this concession is not too much. I have been used myself to consider amusements under the head of such as are strictly social; and of such as contain in them a principle adverse to society. Many amusements are of the former kind; but cards, and some other games, in which one party must be victorious, and the other subdued, encourage a

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kind

kind of principle somewhat opposite to the social temper: and the many little squabbles, even among friends, at such games, prove the truth of my remark. However, if they could be played at with such moderation, as occasioned no heart-burning, I should be inclined to wave *this objection*; and consider chiefly the *excess*. It is this indeed which creates the great mischief; and the *example* spreads it. If cards are played in the parlour, they descend to the kitchen: and from your parlour, and kitchen, to those of your neighbour, and so on. The lust of card-playing is now become so flagitious, that every serious man, I affirm,

affirm, ought to withdraw his own example from so general, and pernicious a practice. The clergyman, in particular, should dread to sanction, what has certainly so bad an effect on the manners of the people.

But, said I, Sir, my example is of so little weight, that it cannot make things either better, or worse.

There is not, replied the Dean, with some warmth, in the whole magazine of false reasoning, a more destructive mode of it, than this. I will not set a good example, because I know another will not follow it. So

nobody will set a good example. We have better rules surely, to direct us, than the practice of other people. When a man thus puts his own practice, and example into the hands of others, and depends upon his neighbour's conduct to regulate his own, what reformation can we expect? If we are right, under such circumstances, it is by chance. Every man's example has its influence, more or less, which he should endeavour, for the sake of good order, to make as instructive as he can, without troubling himself with the example of others. In families, where cards are never played at in the parlour, I dare

take upon me to say they are rarely played at in the kitchen: except perhaps where servants, who have already learned their lesson in card-playing families, are introduced.—And if the obligation to avoid setting a bad example, in this instance be general, it binds the ecclesiastic with double force. He should certainly be the *salt of the earth*; and endeavour to keep every thing, as far as he can, from corruption. Consider what a change even that might effect. There are perhaps twenty or thirty thousand ecclesiastics of different denominations, scattered about the various parts of England. If each of these

influence a dozen, which (including their own families) is no extraordinary calculation, consider what a party would be gained over. Each of these again, we may suppose, might have some influence ; and if we may adopt our Saviour's allusion, we might hope to see it work like leaven, through the whole mass. At least, we might hope to see cards confined within the gloomy walls of gaming-houses, and night-cellars.

But I should think, said I, Sir, we should *begin* our reformation at these places. If we could get rid of gaming-houses, and night-cellars, which

which the high, and low vulgar frequent, cards might perhaps be left to us sober people as an innocent amusement.

Not so entirely, my good friend, answered the Dean. It is not only when cards are carried to this pernicious height, that I except against them. Indeed, when a man has taken his degrees at a gaming-table, I have done with him. He is beyond receiving instruction from me. I must therefore inform you, that I do not confine the gaming-table to what is called so (as they say) κατ' ἐξοχην. I rank under that head all those scenes
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of profligacy, scattered, not only through the metropolis, but through every part of the country, where high stakes are pledged, and well-dressed people meet, not so much with a view of amusement, as with a purpose to pillage one another.—These however are only the *excesses* of card-playing; but for various other reasons it should be discouraged. In the best light, I think, cards afford only a frivolous, and seducing amusement; especially to a clergyman. They often lead him into more expence, still short of what may be called *gaming*, than may be prudent for him to incur. Once engaged in the habit of playing, or
lifted,

lifted, if I may so phrase it, into the corps of card-players, he cannot sometimes avoid venturing higher stakes, than he could wish.—But suppose he keep the scales of loss and gain pretty even, (as I have sometimes heard the moderate card-player boast) what shall we say for the expence of time? Here comes in a very seducing part. Evening after evening is lost. The afternoon is often added. Habits are formed. Play and comfort are connected; and the day ends in joyless vacancy, that does not conclude with cards.—Besides, you give yourself into the hands of others. It is unsocial to break up a party. You
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are not therefore master of yourself. —Then again, consider, you cannot choose your company. You are a known card-player; you cannot stand out, when a hand is wanted, and must often consort with those you dislike.—Above all, young people should consider, how easily, where amusements are concerned, the mind glides into habits of indulgence. In these journeys of pleasure, step follows step mechanically. I knew a young lady thus debauched into a card-player, though she was once among the most amiable of her sex—domestic—ingenious—fond of books—full of resources, and never at a loss for the

the employment of her time. Family amusements were all the pleasures she sought. Her father and mother were excellent people; and brought her up, an only daughter, in, what I may justly call, the cheerful restraints of religion. But during a short visit at a relation's, to which her father reluctantly consented, she unhappily got a taste for card-playing; and, when she returned home, did not much enjoy those innocent domestic circles, in which, before, she had given, and received, so much pleasure. In short, she had lost her heart to this vile amusement. Soon afterwards she married a young gentleman of fortune

fortune—a sober, virtuous, and modest young man, but of talents very inferior to those of his wife. With discretion she might have modelled her family, as she had pleased; and had an excellent model before her, in her father's: but she chose rather to corrupt her husband, and turn his mansion into a gaming house.—I mention this example as one among a hundred I have seen in my life, to shew the rapid progress of pleasurable habits, and those of cards perhaps beyond all others; to which I think particularly belongs that excellent adage, *Principiis obsta.*

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But since, said I, Sir, we are often obliged to consort with those, whom we disesteem, or with those, whose minds are too unfurnished to bear a part in conversation, is it not useful, and often necessary, to introduce something, that removes, for the time at least, all disgusts—something that may level those, who have not sense, with those who have; and enable them to pass their time together in mutual civility, without labouring to support a conversation, which most probably more than half of them are utterly unable to support?

This is the first time, said the Dean
smiling,

smiling, I ever heard cards mentioned as a bond of benevolence : as the cause of ill-humour, and dissension, I have often heard them taxed. But I suppose you do not hold the argument seriously. You cannot imagine cards to be more effectual to this end, than even those modes of general civility, which commonly reign among polite people ; and check, during the intercourse, all appearance of such little hostilities, as may rankle within. At least you must allow, that card-playing is not quite a clerical mode of inculcating benevolence.—And as to your solicitude to lower the man of wit and sense to a level with his neighbours,

hours, and bring conversation to an equilibrium, I think it ill-judged. If the man of sense have any good-nature in his composition, he will not be much hurt at bestowing on his weaker neighbour a pittance of his own information, and wisdom. At least, it is not well done in you to furnish him with an apology to withhold it. How is the poor man to improve, if on his coming into company, an immediate stop is put to all conversation by calling for cards?—However, I consider this argument only as a shuffle. Any conversation is surely better, than the dull monotony of a card-table. He who can bear the conversation of

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a card player, may bear any thing. For myself, I protest I should make better company of a parrot.

I cannot, said I, truly say much for the conversation of a card-table, except that it is innocent, and may keep conversation from taking a worse turn.

Why, yes, said the Dean, and so it would, if you should clap a gag, into every body's mouth, when he went into company. At the same time I should lay but little stress either on one expedient, or the other. A short *restraint* affords no *amendment*. Bring
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the axe to the root of the tree—correct the heart—and you do something. But till that be done, the propensity to scandal, may be *checked*, but will find its opportunity to *break out*, whether you play at cards, or not. Perhaps, like fermenting liquor, it may burst out with more violence from having been confined.

But perhaps, said I, Sir, it may be worth consideration, that if people do not employ their vacant time on cards, they may do worse.

I know not what they can do worse,

answered the Dean, if you respect their amusements only. And if you think cards will keep a young fellow from the stews or a debauch, when he is inclined to either, I fear you attribute much more to them, than they deserve. If a man be fond of two games, both are amusements; and so far as there is a similitude between them, the love of one may perhaps overpower an attachment to the other. But when a man is fond of a *game*, and addicted to a *vice*, as there is no similitude between the objects, you have no more ground for expecting the former will drive out the latter, than

than for supposing a man's dancing a minuet, should prevent his admiring a picture.

You drive me, said I, Sir, out of all my strong holds : but you must give me leave to make one observation more. I have heard sickly people speak of cards as a great relief in pain ; when the mind is incapable of any other attention. And if exciting this frivolous attention will draw it from attending to its malady, cards, I think, are an opium, and may often be called a blessing.

I have certainly no objection, re-

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plied the Dean, to their being used medicinally. But then I should wish to have them sold only at the apothecary's shop, and the doctor to prescribe the use of them. I should fear, if the patient prescribed for himself, he may be apt to take too large a dose, as he often does of laudanum, and other anodyne drugs. I once knew an old lady, who had lost the use of her speech, and of both her hands, by two or three paralytic strokes; and every evening took the remedy you have been prescribing. She was a lady of large fortune—gave good suppers—and had generally a number of humble friends about her,

one

one of whom always, after supper, dealt, sorted, and held her cards, and pointing to this, or that, the o'd lady nodded at the card she wished to have her friend play. But it sometimes happened, that the paralytic shake of the head was mistaken for the nod of approbation, and unfortunately a wrong card was played ; which threw the old lady (whose whole heart was in the remedy she was taking) into such violent fits of passion, that people thought she received more injury from these irritations, than benefit from the prescription.

I fear, said I, Sir, from all this ridi-

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cule, that you thought what I advanced, rather impertinent.

My ridicule, replied the Dean, was not surely directed at you; but at those poor, pitiable objects, who cannot, even at the close of life, be happy without their cards. I have heard of many such; and have known some. At a time, when serious thoughts, and meditation are the most becoming, it is pitiable, in the last degree, to see the dregs of life running off in so wretched a manner. If there is anything in human nature, which unites contempt, and commiseration, said a friend of mine (coming from a fight
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of this kind) it is the spectacle of a man going down to the grave with a pack of cards in his hand!

Indeed, said I, Sir, these frightful examples are of themselves sufficient warnings.—But I have done. I give up my cause. I was willing to say what I could for an amusement, in which I fear I have had too great an interest. But I hope, Sir, I shall not be the worse either for your ridicule, or your instruction.—After all however it must be confessed, that we young clergymen have a difficult part to act. The prevalence of custom is
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a vehement tide, which we find it very hard to stem.

I should therefore, said the Dean, wish you to keep out of it; which every man may, if he please. Be resolute at first in resisting importunity, and importunity will presently cease. You will soon be considered as one who has a will of his own.—The clergy, I think, may be divided into two great bodies. One class are such as enter into the ministry only to make their fortunes. These are a kind of amphibious animals. I cannot call them clergymen. They are traders in ecclesiastical goods.

goods. With them my arguments have nothing to do. They have no scruples; and will comply of course with every thing that will recommend them to the world.—In the other class are many, no doubt, who have the end and honour of their profession at heart; and wish only to be convinced of the propriety, or impropriety of a thing, to do it, or leave it undone. But there are numbers, I fear, in this class, well-meaning, on the whole, and serious men, who are yet ready to make the customs of the world an apology for a variety of improper practices; and slide into a number of corrupt habits, without

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considering that to oppose the seducing customs of the world is the very essence of a state of trial; and that it is the very business of a good pastor to set up his own example as a way mark against them.

To all this I fully assented.

Aye, Mr. Frampton, continued the Dean, with much earnestness in his manner, these are serious truths. The customs of the world put a gloss upon many improper things—among which I reckon cards; and mislead numbers, who are glad perhaps to misinterpret the apostle, and tell you, that if they
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do them not, *they must altogether go out of the world.* But whatever liberties the layman takes (and yet I know not what gives him any exclusive liberty) the clergyman ought to be particularly guarded against the indulgence of any amusement, which is fraught with so much mischief, both public and private ; which so easily gains ground by the force of habit ; and in the defence of which, you see, so little can be said. Many bad habits subside in age. Nature cannot hold out. But here is a mischievous propensity, which cleaves often to our very last sand. It is possible, I may yet live to see people so barefaced, as
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to make no distinction of days, and play at cards on Sundays. It is practised, I am informed, in France, from which we derive too many of our fashions.

I told the Dean, that, as I believed I was better acquainted with the history of card-playing, than he was, I was afraid that vile practice, though not frequent, had gotten at least some footing among *us*. One instance I knew. I had, not long ago, the honour to be admitted, in a dearth of better company, to the card-table of a lady of fashion. Soon after I found she played at cards on Sundays; when
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fearing lest I should be involved in the imputation of that practice, I never would touch another card at her house. On her calling me to account for deserting my post, I plainly told her the reason. This led to a short debate. She said, after the duties of the day were over (for she was a constant church-woman) she thought a little recreation in the evening was very allowable. I talked of the great impropriety at least of *breaking down fences*, and laying the practice open to the common people, even though she would not allow any profanation of the day. She thought the fault lay

lay in the cattle, that *went through the breach*. At length however she allowed that playing at *cards on a Sunday*, was a very improper practice to get *among the lower people*—and farther, that, when *carried to the height of gaming*, it was a very improper Sunday-amusement to *any one*. I begged, she would suffer me to shew her, merely on *these two concessions of her own*, the mischief of playing at cards *at all* on a Sunday. And that she might see it in the stronger light, I offered to put my arguments on paper. But I could never obtain leave. She always stopped my mouth with
saying,

saying, she had made up her mind, and wished to hear no more on the subject.

I honour you, said the Dean, as I should every young clergyman, who could make so proper a stand against a vicious fashion.—And now, in return for your story, in which you have given me an instance of some *duplicity*, I will contrast it with one of genuine *simplicity*. A friend of mine had a curate, recommended from Cambridge, an excellent young man, who had never been in a scrape during the whole time he had been at the university. He was addicted to no im-

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proper amusement; and cards in particular he disliked. It happened however, on some singular occasion (I believe on that of a young lady's coming of age) he was invited among several other young folks to spend an evening, where cards made a part of the entertainment. He stood out strenuously, as wholly ignorant of every game. At last some *general game* * (I know not what they call it) being proposed, and some of the company

* We have among us at present a kind of game, which is called a *round game*, from the company's sitting *round* a table. The Dean probably alludes to some such game as this, which might be in use in his time.

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(as corruptors are always at hand) instructing him in what he could not but feel he had powers of mind to comprehend, he was drawn in, and sat down, though little attentive to the business, in which he was engaged.

At the end of the game, when the accounts of profit and loss were settled, his companions gave him four shillings, to his great surprise, for certain little ivory fish, which he had received in the course of the game.

The next morning, when he told the story, he said, it was a fortunate thing, that he had been successful; for if he had lost four shillings, instead of winning them, he should certainly have

gone off without paying his debt ; as he had not the least conception, that the ivory fish he had received, represented any thing, but themselves.

The good Dean having thus dispatched the card-table, led me next to the play-house. What a noble institution, said he, have we here, if it were properly regulated ! I know of nothing that is better calculated for moral instruction—nothing that holds the glass more forcibly to the follies and vices of mankind. I would have it go, hand in hand, with the pulpit. It has nothing indeed to do with scripture, and Christian doctrines. The pa-
geants,

geants, as, I think, they were called, of the last century, used to represent scripture-stories, which were very improperly introduced, and much better handled in the pulpit. But it is impossible for the pulpit to represent vice and folly in so strong a light as the stage. One addresses our reason, the other our imagination; and we know which receives commonly the more forcible impression. There should always however be a little dash of the *caricature* to give a zest to *character*. But nature and probability should be strictly observed. I remember—I believe it is now thirty years ago—seeing a play acted (I for-

get its title) in which an old fellow is represented dallying with a coquettish girl. It was an admirable picture from nature. The sprightly actions of youth imitated by the ridiculous gesticulations of age, struck my memory so forcibly, that the picture is yet as fresh, as if it had been painted yesterday.—As *moral representations*, I cannot say, I think Shakespear's plays are models. There is a fund of nature in them—vast invention—and a variety of passions admirably coloured. I wish I could forget the loose fancy, which wantons through most of them, and is extremely disagreeable to a chaste ear.

But

But what I chiefly remark, is, that I do not *commonly* find in them (what I should wish to find in *every* play) some virtue, or good quality set in an amiable light; or some vice, or folly set in a detestable one; and made, as it were, the burden of the whole. I call the scenes of Falstaff admirable copies from nature; but I know not what instruction they give. Now I should wish to turn the play-house into a mode of amusing instruction; and to suffer no theatrical performance, which did not eminently conduce to this end. Young men, for instance, are apt to be led away by vicious pleasures; and to supply their

profligacy, are often carried from one degree of wickedness to another. A play on such a subject * might perhaps deter many a young man in the beginning of his career. Or a good effect might be produced by placing some virtue in opposition to its contrary vice; as *contrasts* generally have more force, than *simple exhibitions*.

I asked the Dean, if he meant to exclude comedy from his theatre?

* There was afterwards a play formed on this very plan, intitled *George Barnwell*; the moral of which is good, though the execution is far from being faultless.

By

By no means, said he: I should rather encourage it more than tragedy; inasmuch as I should have more hope of curing such vices, and follies, as require the lash, than such as require the gibbet. My stage-authors should deal much in ridicule, which, when well conducted, and not thrown on individuals, but cast broadly on vice, and folly, I conceive to be an admirable engine. But I should not ridicule a squinting eye—a stammering voice—a provincial dialect—the peculiarities of a profession—or indeed any oddity, or deformity, that was not strictly immoral.

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I am afraid, said I, Sir, you will cut off much of our modern wit by this severity : for these oddities are, in general, a great source of it. The broken English of a Frenchman—the blunders of an Irishman—or the broad dialect of a Scotsman, are what our modern theatres are taught to believe very witty. I shall however (to speak for one) think myself much obliged to you for ridding the stage of all this trumpery of false wit and humour; and bringing only such ridiculous characters forward, as can *support themselves*, if I may so speak, by their real follies, and vices.—But there is one thing, which, I fear, will incapacitate

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rate the stage from being of much use in the reformation of manners. The scenery, the dresses, the musick, and other appendages of the theatre, make the expence so great, that it can never be brought to a level with the pockets of the multitude.

That is well urged, said the Dean. I thank you for the hint, and will immediately model my dramatic representations in conformity to it.—We have one church for rich, and poor. All pay equal homage to one God—all are equally his creatures—and it is fit we should all worship him in
one

one place.—But though we have only one church, there is no necessity to have only one theatre. In my Utopia, therefore, I mean to establish two—one for the higher—the other for the lower orders of the community. In the first, of course, there will be more elegance, and more expence; and the drama must be suited to the audience by the representation of such vices, and follies, as are found chiefly among the great. The other theatre shall be equally suited to the lower orders. And to enable them the better to partake of the moral amusement provided for them, I mean to abolish all
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tumbling—dancing—bear - baiting, and every thing else, that tends only to encourage *merriment without instruction.*

You have now, said I, Sir, perfectly satisfied me. I shall heartily rejoice in the erection of your two theatres. And it gives me great delight to hear you speak so favourably of the drama. I own, if there is any one amusement, which appears to me superior to all others, it is to see a good play, well acted.

But hold, said the Dean: you understand, I hope, that I give this commendation only to theatres of my
own.

own regulating; not to such as at present exist. With a few exceptions, I think I may describe the drama of the present age*, as having nothing less in its view, than good morals. Amorous scenes—vicious principles—the most indelicate language—debauched characters set off in agreeable colours—scoffs thrown out against religion, and morals—with light music tending to soften the mind,

* It must be observed, that the drama of that age was exceedingly corrupt. Charles the Second had introduced great licence into the theatre. Bad as the stage still is in this respect, it is much chaster than it was then.

and

and make it still more susceptible of those vile incentives, that had already been excited, are too much, I fear, the ingredients of our theatrical amusements. And even, if the play were good, and tended to give the thoughts any virtuous impression, the light farce, coming after, would throw the whole at once out of the mind. All farces I should recommend to my lower theatre. The style of all its compositions should be somewhat in this way. But they should all certainly have a moral tendency. The farce, as at present used, is a most absurd excrescence; and I suppose intended merely to please the vulgar. As there

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is an upper gallery, the people there must be pleased, as well as those in the boxes. But my two theatres will render this double mode of representation unnecessary.—In short, if the stage were regulated as I could wish it, even clergymen almost might be actors upon it. As it is now managed, they cannot well, I think, be innocent spectators. Tacitus, I remember, somewhere speaking of the modesty of the German ladies, attributes it in a great measure to their not being suffered to attend public diversions*. I should wish only to
make

* The words of the original are, *Nullis*

spec.

make one improvement on this German fashion, which is, neither to permit gentlemen, nor ladies to attend them, till they are better regulated.

The historian might have reference to the public amusements of *his own* country; with which he thought it happy, the German ladies had no opportunities of being corrupted.

Whatever his precise meaning was, it shews his general opinion of such amusements: and, I suppose, you will allow Tacitus, though not an apostle, to be a very good judge of men, and manners.—Besides, added the Dean,

Spectaculorum illecebris, nullis conviviorum irritationibus corrupta.

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the very profession of a player is rendered so disreputable, that nobody ought to encourage it. Take the matter home with you. Would you wish either your son or daughter to seek a livelihood on the stage? If not, do you think it shews much moral rectitude to encourage in other people's children, what, on virtuous principles, you would shudder at in your own?

I told the Dean, I durst not take upon me to answer his invective either against the stage, or its professors. I feared there was more truth in what he had said, than I wished to find.

A cler-

A clergyman, I observed, must often be in the way of hearing, and seeing improprieties; which he cannot avoid. But I allowed it certainly to be a different case, when he went *voluntarily* into the way of these things.—I then asked the Dean, what he thought of dancing-assemblies, and cheerful meetings of other kinds?

As they are at present managed, said the Dean, so far as I am acquainted with them, I should hardly allow a clergyman to attend any of them. Put them under my regulation, and he may attend them all.

For the sake of truth, I replied, I must say, that I have attended the assemblies at our county-town, not constantly, indeed, but very frequently, and I do not remember ever seeing (except perhaps once, or twice) what the most exact person would call the least breach of decorum, or good manners.

I know not, said the Dean, what you precisely mean by the least breach of decorum : but before I should give my sanction to the assemblies at your county-town, I should wish to ask a few question . Is all company, that are well dressed, promiscuously admitted ?

—or admitted on the introduction of nobody can tell who?—Is there no vying in dress, and ornament, and fashion?—Are no card-tables introduced?—Are suppers, and drinking, and late hours excluded?—While you are dancing, or carding, or drinking above stairs, is any care taken of your poor servants below?—Are they left to saunter about inn-yards and tap-houses, to get into bad company—or, not knowing what to do with themselves, to debauch one another? Unless you can answer me rationally on all these heads, I shall never suffer any clergyman, over whom I have influence, to attend any of these meetings. It may

difficult perhaps to prevent the layman from filling the heads of his sons and daughters with drefs, and vanity, and folly, and intrigue, and all the impertinence, that attends fuch promiscuous, ill-regulated affemblies—we must leave him, if he please, to fet them an example himself, and go before them in all these scenes of diffipation—we must leave him also to take no more care of the morals of his servants, than if they were his cattle; and to pay no attention to the difficulties, into which he leads them. If he will run into these *excesses*, (I have no better word in my dictionary to explain my meaning) I cannot prevent it: but certainly I
should

should wish the clergyman to be very cautious how he gives any encouragement to such assemblies by his example. The world may laugh at him : but he must learn to bear the ridicule of the world ; and I hope in return he will meet approbation elsewhere.

But, said I, Sir, I have often heard, that prudent fathers and mothers consider these meetings, as places, where their daughters are seen to most advantage.

Aye, replied the Dean, I have lately heard that subject discussed in all its folly by one of these prudent mo-

thers; to whom I was weak enough to give my advice on this head, for the sake of an amiable god-daughter of mine. I hate the idea of carrying young women, like colts, to a fair. It is indelicate: it is below their dignity. They should not seek; but be sought after. Few happy marriages, I believe, are founded on these hasty impressions.—I shall not, however, say more on this point, as I am not instructing the world at large; but only giving advice to my brethren of the clergy. Let the beau suit himself with a belle, and choose a wife from the made-up young ladies, who are taught to say smart things, and
shine

shine at assemblies; and whose heads are fuller of fashions, than of such knowledge as most becomes them. But when the clergyman thinks it prudent to change his condition, let him look for a wife in some domestic family; and endeavour to choose one, whom he hears sober people commend for her private virtues. And if she happen to be known in any polite circle, and dignified by the name of a *lifeless, inanimate thing*, he has still the better chance for happiness.

As I was always fond of dancing, I did not care to let the argument wholly drop; and told the Dean, I

hoped he had no dislike to dancing in *itself*; but only when it was improperly circumstanced. It appeared to me a very innocent winter-evening amusement.

It appears so to me, said the Dean. I have already told you, that if you will suffer me to regulate your dances, and other evening-meetings, I will freely indulge you in them.— Summon an assembly, when you please, at some *private* house. *Public* houses always lead to promiscuous company, and intemperance. Let the meeting consist of well-educated, and well-disposed young people of
both

both sexes; and when the music strikes up, and the dance begins, send for me; and I will hobble away, as fast as my gouty feet will allow; and if I may be permitted quietly to occupy a corner of the room in an elbow-chair, I shall enjoy the scene as much as any of you. To see youth and innocence made happy amidst such amusements, as are suitable to them, always gives a new joy to my philanthropy; which is as suddenly injured, when I see them entangled in pleasures, which I cannot but look upon, as secret snares for their innocence.— And yet I cannot say I should wish to see a clergyman, except perhaps a
very

very young one, more than a spectator of these amusements. To see him, to-day, sailing about in a minuet step, and to-morrow preaching, in a pulpit, might make a contrast perhaps too strong for some of his hearers. I do not, however, wish to determine precisely. The amusement is certainly innocent.—With regard to the other meetings you mention, if you put them under the same rational restraint, I have no objection to any of them. I should be pleased to meet a set of virtuous, well-bred young men, or a mixed company, either at dinner, or supper; and if their chief end were either conversation, or innocent amusement,

I should

I should do the best in my power to amuse, and enliven them. Nor should I expect them all to be men of agreeable manners, ingenuity, and information. I should only indulge the hope of their having the same dislike, that I had, to transgress the rules of decency, and propriety.—But as for clubs met together on set purpose to be joyous—to drink, and to rattle—to sing songs, and catches—to roar, and stagger, as the evening gets late, I hold them in abhorrence. No clergyman* should ever join in such orgies;
and

* Johnson and his friend Beauclerk were in company with several clergymen, who thought

and I should think very meanly of him, if he should frequent a company, that had the least tendency to that riotous mirth, which produces these improprieties of behaviour.

You seemed to mention, said I, Sir, with a mark of disapprobation, songs, and catches. Do you see any

thought they should appear to advantage by assuming the lax jollity of men of the world. Johnson, who, they expected, would be entertained, sat grave, and silent for some time. At last, turning to Beauclerk, he said, by no means in a whisper, "The merriment of these parsons is mighty offensive."

Bos. Life, vol. iii. p. 328.

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thing particularly mischievous in them ?

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By no means, replied the Dean, when they are not found in bad company ; and when the words are such as neither countenance vice, nor violate decorum. If the select assembly we just left dancing, choose to amuse themselves after their dance, or after supper, with singing, I should not only approve it ; but beg leave to listen to them. Even the clergyman I will allow to sing in such an assembly ; though I should warmly reprove him, if he should sing for the entertainment of a mixed company, or at a pub-

a public meeting.—If I should not be thought precise, or puritanical, I should, now and then, recommend a psalm-tune, especially on a Sunday evening. We have several psalm-tunes, which are very fine ; and when sung in parts by sweet female voices, are, in my ear, more harmonious, than any other species of music ; and in the language of our great, but unfashionable poet*,

Divide the night, and lift our thoughts to
heaven.

* At that day Milton, on the account of his political principles, was not in general esteem.

—At

—At the same time, I cannot say, I am a friend to instrumental music on a Sunday-evening; from no objection to the thing itself, (though, indeed, I think harmonious voices sweeter, when unaccompanied) but I should fear its being misconstrued by undistinguishing people, to whom we should always be careful not to give offence. Psalms are sung in churches, and can lead into no mistake: but fiddles, and flutes, and harpsichords are merry instruments, and, in some people's opinion, can never be accommodated to purposes of devotion*.—

As

* Occiduus is a pastor of renown.

When he has prayed, and preached the sabbath
down,

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With

As to *catches*, I know little of them: but from what I do know, they make no attempt either at sense, or sentiment. The harmony may be good; and if the words, though senseless, have no ill-meaning, I shall not re-

With wire, and catgut he concludes the day,
Quav'ring and semiquav'ring thought away.
The full concerto swells upon your ear;
All elbows shake.—

Will not the sickliest sheep of every flock
Resort to this example?—

If apostolic gravity be free
To play the fool on Sunday, why not we?
If he the tinkling harpsichord regards
As inoffensive, what offence in cards?
Strike up the fiddles, let us all be gay:
Laymen have leave to dance, if parsons play.

COWPER.
probate;

probate, though I cannot commend them.

Having dispatched, said the Dean, all our *riotous*, and *cruel* amusements, and likewise such as are *trifling*, and *seducing*, (though they often, as in some instances just observed, intermingle with each other) I should now introduce you to such amusements, as I think proper for a clergyman: but as the evening grows late, we will take an earlier hour, if you please, to-morrow to discuss them.

END OF THE SECOND DIALOGUE.

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THIRD

THIRD DIALOGUE.

THE next day was Sunday, when I happened to be wholly engaged. But on Monday I waited on the good Dean soon after dinner.

I am impatient, said I, Sir, to have another conversation with you. You have taken from me my gun, and my dog. You have prohibited my playing at cards, and have refused me leave to

go

go to an assembly, or to meet my friend at a tavern; and I cannot but be solicitous to know, what amusement you will at length allow me.

But are not you, replied the Dean, rather unreasonable? I have indeed taken your gun. But as to your dog, you may keep him, if you please, for a companion. I have no objection. Have I not at least *connived* also at your fishing? Have I not introduced you to many agreeable societies? Have I not given you leave to sing, and to dance? And does not all this satisfy you? However, I

mean still to do more. I wish only to make your amusements—your habits—your company—your dress—and your profession all agree.—By the way, I am not a little solicitous about the dress of a clergyman; which I think a matter of more consequence, than the generality of people will perhaps allow. I think it an argument of great lightness in a clergyman to endeavour, as far as he can, to adopt the lay-habit. He shews he has embraced his own profession only for reasons of convenience; and in his heart dislikes its restraints. I should wish to have every clergyman, especially when in full orders, obliged
to

to appear always in a short cassock, under his coat. He could not then so easily adopt improprieties in his dress; and might be more upon his guard also against improprieties in his behaviour. His clerical habit would be a continual call upon him for decorum, as he durst not, in that garb, do many things, which, dressed like a layman, he might be tempted to do. Besides, it might tend to keep such young men out of the church, as, when in it, are a disgrace both to it, and to themselves. Cloathing was originally intended for the sake of decency, and warmth. In civilized societies, it became afterwards of use to

distinguish ranks: and if in this instance the distinction were a little more enforced, it would, I am persuaded, have a good effect.

I hope, Sir, said I, that my wardrobe, if it were all produced before you, would give you no offence. Nothing would be found there, but what is strictly clerical. Indeed I myself have been often highly offended at the improper dress of many of my younger brethren. I wonder not, therefore, at *your* being offended.

So far then, answered the Dean, I may presume upon you, as a hopeful
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disciple; and that, as you are clerical in your dress, you will be clerical also in your amusements.—Now as *exercise*, on which health so much depends, is one great end of amusement, and as the clerical life may in general be called a sedentary one, he who provides amusements for a clergyman, should have an especial view to exercise. But though I forbade the clergyman to gallop after hounds, I have no objection to his mounting his horse, and riding a dozen miles, in a morning, for exercise.

But without some end in view, I

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observed, few people were fond of a solitary ride.

Solitary ride ! exclaimed the Dean. Have you forgotten the philosopher's noble adage, *Nunquam minus solus, quam cum solus* ? I should allow a man brought up in business to urge such a pretence : but in a scholar I cannot admit it. The very trot of a horse is friendly to thought. It beats time, as it were, to a mind engaged in deep speculation. An old acquaintance of mine used to find its effect so strong, that he valued his horse for being a little given to stumbling. I know
not

not how far, he would say, I might carry my contemplation, and totally forget myself, if my honest beast did not, now and then, by a false step, jog me out of my reverie; and let me know, that I had not yet gotten above a mile or two out of my road*.

But every scholar, said I, Sir, has not the art of keeping his thoughts so collected. The trotting of a horse, even without stumbling,

* This story was afterwards told of Dr. Young—not the author of the Night-thoughts; but another clergyman of that name, remarkable for simplicity of character, and absence of mind.

may

may be enough to dissipate his best meditations.

If he cannot think, answered the Dean, in one way, let him think in another. If he cannot lay premises and conclusions together, and make a sermon; let him consider some letter he has to write—or some conference with a neighbour to manage. He must be a very thoughtless fellow, if he have not some useful topic to engage his thoughts. Or perhaps he may have some friend to call upon. At worst, he may amuse himself with looking at the country around him. It is a pleasure to see how differently the
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the corn, or the grass grows in different parishes; and to mark its progress. Every season furnishes some new, and agreeable scene. He sees the woods assume one appearance in the spring—another in summer—a third in autumn—and a fourth in winter. And as nature is never at a stand, he sees a continual variation in her scenes. So that, if he have no resources in himself, he may still find them in the beauties of nature.

But perhaps, I objected, he is not fond of riding; or he may not be able to keep a horse.

Let him walk then, said the Dean, I should recommend walking to him, as every way a preferable exercise. Over the horseman he will enjoy many advantages. He is instantly equipped. He has only to take his hat, and stick, and call his dog. Besides, he need not keep the highway, like the horseman. He goes over the stile—he gets into the devious path—he wanders by the side of the river, or through the mead—and if these sequestered scenes do not make him think, I know not what can do it.— Besides, he may use as *much* exercise in half the time, which is of consequence to a scholar—and I should suppose

suppose as *wholesome* exercise.—But above all things, I should wish him to get a habit of thinking methodically as he walks. It will soon become as easy to think in the fields, as at his desk: and he will enjoy at once the double advantage of study, and exercise. Here again, he has an advantage over the horseman. He has his hands at liberty to manage his memorandum-book, and his black-lead pencil; which with the incumbrances of a whip, and a bridle, is more difficult. To think methodically *on horseback* is the work rather of a strong head, which can continue,

tinue, and carry on an argument—digest it in the mind—and remember the several parts and dependences of it. *On foot*, the memorandum-book eases the head of all this trouble, by fixing the argument, as it proceeds. For myself, the exercise of walking with a memorandum-book in my hand, hath ever been among the first pleasures of my life. When I was a young man, and could go among my poor neighbours, I had three employments at the same time: visiting my parish—studying—and using exercise. I have made in these excursions many a sermon. The greatest
part

part of this book * was first rudely composed in the fields, and when I came home, I always digested what had occurred in my walk—consulted my authorities, and wrote all fair over. And even since I grew old, when it pleases God to allow me the use of my feet, I still continue the same exercise: only instead of being able, as I was then, to take a fatiguing excursion, without paying much attention to roads or weather, I am obliged now to shorten my walk—to rest a little, and divide it into por-

* The *Origines Sacrae*; which the Dean had just been correcting.

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tions

tions—to creep along easy paths—in garden-walks, or under sheltering hedges.

Much do I wish, said I, Sir, that you could continue with more ease your useful walks, in which the world hath so much partaken, and will long partake.—For myself, I shall certainly endeavour to imitate an example, which I am convinced is so profitable. I will immediately get a memorandum-book; and hope in time to find more pleasure in bringing home the head of a sermon, than I have often done in bringing home a pheasant, or a partridge.—But still, Sir, there
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are many pious, and good clergymen, who may be great blessings to their parishes, and yet were never able to compose a sermon themselves; and cannot perhaps, by any means, induce a habit of thinking methodically—What are they to do?

Why they must endeavour, said the Dean, as I advised the horseman in the same circumstances, to find employment for their thoughts, as they are able. If they are visiting a poor neighbour in sickness, or distress, they may think what to say on the occasion. The duties of his parish will always be a call to exercise, and engage a

worthy clergyman to be frequently abroad in one shape, or other, especially if his parish be extensive.—He may also take a book, and read at intervals, which will always furnish some employment for his thoughts.—I have heard Sir Roger speak of the mode of exercise used by his late friend Dr. Bret. He would generally, during two hours every day, fall out into the fields, with his spud in his hand; and cut up all the weeds he could meet with. A field of thistles was to him a sporting country: and he used to say, good man! when he was inclined to boast a little of his benevolent exercise, that he believed,
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he did not save his parishioners less than a dozen pounds every year in weeding.—But if walking, after all, except when some end, or parish-duty is in view, cannot be made pleasant to a clergyman, let him seek other exercise. Does he love a garden? There cannot be a more clerical amusement, than the cultivation of it. The flower-garden—the fruit-garden—or the kitchen-garden may all afford him great amusement, and are perfectly consistent with his character. I should think it no discredit to a clergyman to have his vines, and his fruit-trees better trained by his own hands, than those of any professed gardener

in the country: and even his pease, and beans, and cabbages to be in a more flourishing condition.—If he wish for still stronger exercise, let him roll his walks, or dig his ground *usque ad sudorem*. This will be of great use to him; for besides the advantage of it, it will enable him to take as much exercise in a couple of hours, as will serve him for the day.—It is a wise provision in the statutes of some monastic houses, to oblige their members to employ themselves in manual labour during so many hours in the four-and-twenty. Nothing can contribute more to give them spirits, and rid them of the spleen. I have heard,
that

that the founder of the famous abbey of La Trappe, in prescribing this kind of discipline to his convent, used to say, that as labour was originally laid on man, as a punishment for sin, we may be assured, it is one of the best means of keeping us out of it.

I admire his wisdom, said I, in making the rules of his convent an antidote to the natural indolence of a cloister. And I think our church, in giving the clergyman a glebe, hath had something of this kind in its eye. I suppose you have no objection to

his making the culture of it his amusement ?

None, replied the Dean, if the selling of his corn, and hay do not lead him to bargain among low people at markets. I have no objection to *any* innocent rural employment. For myself, when I lived in the country, I had great pleasure in all these things. I used to see my horses, and cows foddered; used to visit them in their pastures, and fed my poultry myself. But there are few circumstances, in which I should advise a clergyman to gather his own tithe. It is an odious business.

I asked

I asked the Dean, if he had any objection to *botany*, as an inducement to draw us abroad?

Not the least, said he, if it *be* an inducement—to me it would be none: though it is certainly very innocent; and, if I should judge from the numbers who study it, very interesting also. To examine the beauty and construction of plants—their infinite variety—and their several uses, I can easily conceive, might furnish much rational amusement. But merely to give them hard names, when they already have easy ones; and to *class* them *botanically*, which is in fact to
class

class them so, that nobody, but a botanist can find them out, appears to me something like writing an English grammar in Hebrew. You explain a thing by making it unintelligible.— I must speak however with caution on a subject, of which I know so little*.

I then asked the Dean, what he thought of bowls, tennis, and cricket, as clerical amusements?

* This censure of botany seems to respect Mr. Ray, who was contemporary with Dr. Stillingfleet, and the only botanist of note, I believe, at that time.

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With regard to bowls, said he, I am a party concerned, and therefore improperly called upon either as an advocate, or an evidence. I always liked a game at bowls, and thought it good exercise in a summer-evening. It is just exercise enough to give the body a gentle breathing, without being too violent. With regard to tennis, and cricket, I must be silent for another reason. I know nothing of either of them. To none of these exercises however I have any objection, if the party, which joins you in them, be well chosen. It is this, which makes them innocent, or seducing*.

I think,

* The Dean did not perhaps know, that there
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I think, said I, Sir, we have now exhausted all such amusements, as go under the name of *exercise*; and I cannot but acknowledge, you have been more liberal on this subject, than I expected. If you will be as indulgent to us in our *domestic amusements*, we shall have no reason to complain. What gratification, Sir, on this head, are you disposed to allow us?

All that is necessary, replied the Dean. For my own part, I know not what mental amusement men of
are few tennis-courts, which are not places of public resort. Every amusement, so circumstanced, he would certainly have interdicted.

science and information want, after a studious day, except that of conversing, with each other. Nothing gives the mind a more pleasing relaxation. You need not talk much, if you are indisposed; and listening to good sense, is no fatigue.—Nor does any thing excite genius so much, as this collision among learned men. We are equally pleased with feeling our own sentiments corrected, (as it is done in a manner by ourselves) and with correcting the sentiments of others. These meetings among learned men, may be called the *Fair of learning*. They purchase commodities of each other. One man ex-
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changes his wit for another's knowledge ; and each probably gains what he wants, at the expence of something, in which he abounds.—From this kind of communication too we get a variety of hints, which we may afterwards turn to use ; and that without the fatigue of thinking ; as other people think for us. I knew an ingenious man, who read little himself, but kept much good company ; and had the art of picking up, and turning to account, every thing he heard. By expanding these hints, and throwing beautiful lights, and images upon them, by the help of a good imagination, he would write a sermon, or an essay,

essay, which might be called entirely his own; though his friends, who lived much in the same company with him, could now and then discover, how he came by his leading ideas.—I should not however advise any young man to seek his knowledge in this vague way. It is a hundred to one, he is not qualified for it. Besides, it is an indolent way, when you rest solely upon it. In his books he will always meet with instruction.

If the pleasure, said I, Sir, arising from the company of learned men could be enjoyed in its full purity, it would indeed be a relaxation beyond
all

all others. Where tempers are well harmonized, I can conceive nothing more delightful. But as in chemical mixtures one single heterogeneous ingredient often puts the whole mass into a ferment; so in these learned societies, one man, who talks incessantly, or disputes eagerly, destroys all the pleasure of the meeting; and makes us think we might have employed our time more happily with our own solitary meditations. For myself, indeed I have seldom mixed freely with any one set of people, among whom some, or other has not been of this troublesome description. At college I remember several such intruders

intruders on the social pleasures of an evening.

It is very true, answered the Dean, noisy talking and eager disputing are two great evils in conversation; and are often found, more or less, in the meetings even of learned, and ingenious men. And it is a miserable thing, when a man's self is the only person pleased with hearing his own conversation. Nay, I will go farther, and allow that this is not the only evil, which infests these societies. There are other things, which often render them disagreeable. A friend of mine told me lately, that

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in a capital town in England he was a member of a very reputable society, consisting of several men of taste, and science. He was delighted with their conversation, and thought his time very profitably spent. He soon, however, found, that one, or two of the members of this society had a deistical turn. This might have been endured, if they would have kept their sentiments to themselves, and discussed only points of literature. But they were forward, on all occasions, to move questions on religious subjects; and would discuss them with very offensive licence. My friend therefore seeing no remedy, left his
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company, and consoled no more with a society, where he could not receive pleasure without a great mixture of pain. And indeed I must allow with you, there are so many things, which make these general meetings of literati disagreeable, that I know not whether, as far as mere relaxation is concerned, one has not a better chance for it in the mixed company of well-bred people of both sexes. I should at least wish for no more than three or four, in a society of select friends, to make it agreeable.

But, said I, Sir, there are many of

us poor curates, who have few opportunities of getting into company of any kind; who live in lonely places; and see few, besides the peasants of our own parishes: What resources have you for us?

Why, in the first place, answered the Dean, the peasants of your parish are, in many respects, the properest company you can keep. You will not mingle with their pleasures, and diversions. But the good pastor will often find leisure to enter their houses, and cottages; and see and hear what they are about: and in this duty he will find his amusement. On this head,

head, however, I need not instruct you.—Besides, added he, we are rather going from the question. We are not considering amusement as united *with* duty; but as a relaxation *from* it.—Are you musical? I know no amusement so adapted to the clerical life, as musick. And indeed not only as an amusement; but as a mean often, as Saul used it, to drive away the evil spirit. Sedentary men are subject to nervous complaints; and I have known many a man, who could, at any time, fiddle away a fit of the spleen.

I am myself, said I, musical enough,

to have sometimes felt the relief you mention, though I can, on no instrument, charm any ears, but my own.

And what other ears, replied the Dean, do you wish to charm? To tell you the truth, I should think excellence rather a disadvantage. I have known several clergymen, who were masters of musick, get into disagreeable connections by being called on frequently to assist in concerts with people, whom it would have been more prudent to avoid.—We are willing indeed to suppose, that musick makes a part of our heavenly enjoyments : but on earth, I am persuaded,

suaded, it is sometimes found among very unharmonized souls. It may drive away a fit of the spleen, or moderate some momentary passion; but I fear it has not often much effect in meliorating the heart by subduing inordinate affections.—If, therefore, continued the Dean, you can fiddle so as to amuse yourself, I should desire no more.

I hope then, said I, Sir, my acquirements in this art will not displease you; for they are very far from the point of excellence.—But I am chiefly solicitous to have your opinion on a still more favourite amusement, which

is *drawing*. It has given agreeable employment to many a solitary hour in my life, and I should be sorry to be debarred the exercise of it.

I have no intention, said the Dean, to debar you from it. But I must give you one piece of advice. As you are fond both of musick, and drawing, I should not wish you to practise both. One of these *domestic amusements*, I should think, might find sufficient employment for your leisure.—This piece of advice is from myself. But I am not unqualified to give you other instruction. I have no knowledge of the art myself,

self, but I remember hearing an excellent judge give instruction to a young man, who had a profession, as you have, and wished to follow drawing, only as an amusement. In the first place, I remember, he advised his young friend against colouring, which all dabblers are fond of. To understand the harmony of colours, he said, required great experience; and without it, colouring was daubing. He advised him also, I recollect, against attempting history, or portrait, or animal life, or any other branch, in which *accurate delineation* was required. Landscape he recommended as the easiest, and most pleasing branch, which

which might have the farther advantage of decoying him into the forest, or the field, to examine, or copy nature.

I gave the Dean my best thanks for his advice. Of the utility of that part, which came from himself, I was already convinced by experience ; and had determined to drop one of my amusements, as I found I could not, without too great an expence of time, follow both. With regard to the other part of his advice, I lamented, that it had never been given me before. I owned I was a dabbler, and had daubed over many a sheet of
paper.

paper. But if I continue, said I, to practise drawing, I shall entirely lay aside my colours; and practise my art, such as it is, in a way, that may give me more satisfaction: though perhaps, Sir, I shall please you better, by not aiming at any excellence at all.

If you allude, replied the Dean, to what I said about musick, you mistake my meaning. My great objection to your obtaining excellence in musick, is, lest it should mislead you into improper company. Its sister art is of a more solitary nature, and is not liable to that inconvenience. Except for this reason,
and

and the fear of too much expence of time, I have no objection to your obtaining excellence in both arts.—But though you should not be able to please yourself with your own proficiency in drawing; yet, if you have a taste for the art, you may be greatly amused with the works of others. A clergyman near me, who is now dead, had a small collection of prints, and drawings; and when he was fatigued with study (as he was a very studious man) could, at any time, amuse himself with a few of his prints.

But all this, said I, Sir, requires taste; and if a clergyman have no
taste

taste for these amusements, I hope you have no objection to indulge him in some amusement, which does not require it—in a game at chess, for instance, with a neighbouring vicar; or at back-gammon with the squire?

In my opinion, said the Dean, chess is so far from being a relaxation, as all amusements should be, that, if you are fairly matched, it is a severe study. It is a game, in which a great variety of different movements create double the variety of different circumstances; on each of which circumstances, so numerous a train of consequences again depend, that to provide for all
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the contingences, that arise from your own moves, and may arise from the probable moves of your antagonist, requires a mind intensely occupied in the pursuit before it, and vacant from every other. In short, a skill in this game, like mathematical knowledge, may be continually advancing to perfection. When I was Fellow of St. John's, I played much at chess; and being fond of it, I attained, as I thought, some degree of excellence: till at length, from beating all the young men at Cambridge, who played with me, I began to think myself the best chess-player in England. It happened, on a visit to a friend in London, that an old German officer made

made one of the party. After dinner we went to different amusements, and it was proposed, that he and I should play a game at chess, as we were both known to be chess-players. I modestly threw my glove; but my heart beat with a full assurance of triumph. I soon, however, perceived, that my antagonist opened his game in a manner, to which I had not been accustomed. This roused all my attention. But while I was defending myself in one quarter (for I quickly found I had to act only on the defensive) I received a severe blow on another, which threw me into great confusion. And while I was endeavour-

ing to recover my disordered affairs, the enemy broke in upon me, and shamefully defeated me, without giving me an opportunity of displaying one instance of my prowess. I was convinced, however, that all this mischief had befallen me from too great confidence, and an incautious manner of opening my game. I begged, therefore, another trial: but it ended in the same disgrace. My antagonist, by this time, was fully apprized what a hero he had to deal with; and exulting in his success, desired me to fix upon any chamber on the board I pleased, and use all my strength merely to defend that single post: he engaged.

gaged to attack no other. But in spite of all my endeavours, he gave me check-mate upon that very spot. Nay, he did it repeatedly; for my shame was now turned into admiration. I sat down therefore contented; and endeavoured to console myself by forming the disgrace I had suffered into a lesson against presumption.

I cannot, in return, said I, Sir, tell you a story of my prowess at chess; but, if you will give me leave, I will tell you one of my perseverance. I played a game with a gentleman at my own lodgings, and was victorious. You have taken me, said he, rather

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inopportunately to-day ; but if you will be vacant on Thursday, I shall be this way, and will demand satisfaction. Accordingly on Thursday he came about eleven o'clock ; and by the time we had played three games, two of which I had won, his horses came to the door. I cannot leave the matter thus, said he ; if you can set any little matter before me, we will go on. Two games more were played, when in the midst of the third, a bit of roasted mutton appeared ; and by the time it was cold, I had defeated him again. I was now four or five games before him. Our intercourse therefore with the mutton was short ; and
we

we went to work again. I was still victorious, when the horses returned at six. This is provoking, said he, I cannot leave the matter thus. Can I have a bed at the inn? His orders to his servant now were, not to bring the horses till they were sent for. This was a melancholy note to me, fatigued, as I was already, beyond measure. However, as I was under some obligations to the gentleman, and in my own lodgings, I had no choice. The night ended late, and the morning began early. Breakfast came—the barber came—dinner came—all was negligently treated, except the main point. I sighed inwardly,

and hoped this visitation would now soon have an end. It lasted, however, all that day; and I was still two games before my antagonist; though I had played as carelessly as I could, without discovering my indifference. As the evening drew on, I expected every moment to hear a message sent for the horses; I was shocked with his telling me, we could not part on these unequal terms. As the next day was Saturday, and he must of necessity, he said, then finish, he would try his fortune once more. So we continued nailed to our board, till a late hour on Friday night; and began again before breakfast, on Sa-

turday morning. Towards the close of the day, our accounts differed in one game. But I was too complaisant to dispute the matter; so the horses were sent for, and I was delivered from such a trial of my patience, as I never before experienced.

Scarce any mischief happens to us, said the Dean, but we have the comfort of thinking it might have been worse: and you were happy that your friend did not come to you on Monday, instead of Thursday.—As it appears, however, from *my* story, how much time and pains are necessary to obtain excellence in this game;

and from *your* story, how fascinating a game it is—it is worth while to consider, how far it may be a proper amusement for a clergyman—and whether it really answers the end of an amusement by unbending the mind. If it only substitute one severe study for another, it cannot certainly take the name of an amusement*. Let every one however judge for himself. I found it too interesting to be amusing to me, and therefore in early life

I left

* Cowper, with his usual descriptive talents, admirably portrays the ardour of a chess-player.

Who then

Would waste attention at the chequer'd board,

His

I left it off.—It is certainly, however, a noble game. It gives us an idea of war without its guilt. It gives us a just idea too of common life—of the happy effects of prudent, and cautious steps on one hand ; and of the fatal mischief, which often attends even one false step on the other.

I know not, said I, Sir, whether such games, as are made up of *skill*,

His host of wooden warriors to and fro
Marching, and counter-marching, with an eye
As fixed as marble, with a forehead ridg'd
And furrowed into frows, and with a hand
Trembling, as if eternity were hung
In balance on his conduct of a pin ?

and *chance* together, are not closer imitations of life. Our most prudent plans are often defeated by events, which do not depend on ourselves, but arise from what we call *chance*: while an ill-digested plan-sometimes succeeds without any aid from our own prudence. Games, therefore, consisting partly of *skill*, and partly of *chance*, seem more to resemble the course of events in human life, than games of *mere skill*, like *chess*.

Certainly, replied the Dean, such games afford a juster picture of the *circumstances* of life: but I am speaking of the *conduct* of it. Sometimes,
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it is true, we are ruined by unavoidable calamity; but more often by our own misconduct: and it is this latter view of life, which chess so justly resembles.

Well, said I, Sir, as you repudiate chess from the list of your clerical amusements, because of its *intricacy*, I hope, you will take back-gammon into favour, because of its *simplicity*.

Not into my favour truly, answered the Dean. I know too little of it to make it a favourite. I have no objection, however, to it, but its stupidity. Let those play at it, who like it.

it. It seems to me a noisy, rattling game, fit rather to conclude an evening after a fox-chase, than suited to the taste of men of letters, and refinement.—But indeed I have a sort of prejudice against back-gammon, as it contributed to ruin the fortunes of an excellent young man, with whom, in early life, I was intimate at college. He was related to a rich, old admiral; and was supposed to be his intended heir which he probably might have been, had not this stupid game intervened. Back-gammon was the admiral's delight. He had no resources in himself. As to books, he hardly knew the top of a page from the bottom.

tom. Back-gammon was level to his genius. All his powers were centered in this game. Three, or four hours after dinner ; and half that time after supper, he never failed to play ; and all day long, if the weather did not permit him to go abroad. As the admiral was not a very pleasing man, and besides rather penurious in his house-keeping, his company was not much sought after ; and it fell to the unhappy lot of my friend to be his almost constant antagonist. Day after day—it was weary work. I remember well his coming to me, one evening, much out of humour : “ I have been playing with him, said he,
at

at this stupid game, from four this afternoon, till eight; and he had the conscience, towards the close of this heavy business, to look me full in the face, and cry, Cousin, you play as if you were tired."—In short, my friend could not bear this miserable trespass upon his time, and began to make conditions. The admiral was not used to controul, took the huff, blotted him out of his will, and chose a puppy for his heir, who was fit for nothing, but to play at back-gammon.

A liberal minded man, said I, Sir, is much to be pitied, when his interest,

rest, and his sentiment are thus at variance. Young as I am in life, I have seen several instances of it; but I have seldom known, as on this occasion, sentiment prevail.—Upon the whole however, Sir, I think you are too harsh in your censure of back-gammon. It is not surely a game of deep contrivance; yet I think it possesses variety enough to be amusing even to an enlightened mind, which wishes, during a short interval, to suspend its faculties, and enjoy the refreshment of a little privation of sentiment. What has hurt this poor, harmless game, I believe, more than any thing else, is, its connection with those wicked

wicked little cubes, called *dice*, which are employed in so many villainous purposes, that every communication with them is suspected. One of our good bishops, I have heard, is fond of a game at back-gammon, when he can get snug to it with his chaplain. But he stands much in awe of his own servants, lest in passing to and fro, they should hear their master rattling *dice*. So he plays always on a table, lined with green baize, and throws his dice from lined boxes*.

* This story is told of Bishop Gibson of London; but as he lived after Dr. Stillingfleet's time, I suppose the same device has been practised by other bishops.

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If it had been my case, said the Dean, I should have played openly—These concealments never are concealed. They only shew, that we have not resolution to forbear doing, what, on some account, we do not think perfectly right. For myself, I see no reason, why the bishop may not indulge himself in a game at back-gammon, without scruple, if he like it. As for the ill-repute it lies under, on the account of its connection with *dice*, I see no more reason for it, than that knives and forks should be objected to, because they may become the instruments of gluttony. It is another connection, which occasions

fions the mischief. If these *little wicked cubes*, as you call them, were not connected with certain little *wick d circles* called *money*, they would be perfectly harmless. These little *circles* are, in fact, the wicked companions, which debauch the *cubes*; and are indeed such mischievous companions, as seldom fail to turn all amusements into vice. In my Utopia therefore money shall in no degree be connected with amusement. Its proper place is the market, and there only it has concern.

Gaming, said I, Sir, no doubt, is a very strange perversion of amusement:
but

but is there any objection to a trifling stake, which is never felt, whether we win, or lose ; and is in fact no *object* ?

What end then, said the Dean, does it answer ?

Merely, I replied, to keep the attention a little awake.

But you must allow then, answered the Dean, that as far as it does keep the *attention awake*, so far it is an *object*. The amusement itself, it seems, cannot keep the *attention awake* ; but wants a stimulative, the love of money, which makes you play with that care,

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and caution, which the amusement itself could not do. And is this any thing else, my good friend, (twist, and analyse it, as you please,) but the spirit of avarice? One man's *attention* cannot be *kept awake*, as you phrase it, without playing for a shilling. Another man must keep his *attention awake* with a pound. A third must be enlivened by a stake of ten times as much; and so on, till the attention of some people must be *kept awake* by staking a patrimony. You see then plainly, that if the stake be so trifling, as to be no *object*, it can be no *incentive*; and if it be an object, it can only be so, by your attachment to

a sum of money; and what will you call that attachment, unless you resolve it, with me, into the spirit of avarice?

But though in theory, said I, Sir, you may be able to lead it up to this source, it seems, in fact, to be so trifling, as not to come within any moral calculation.

I know the mathematician, replied the Dean, divides matter with such nicety, as to bring it to an invisible point. But I do not like to see morals so treated. Is the *excess* wrong? If it be, the *approach* cannot be right.

If the mind be *at all* infected with the spirit of *avarice*, and the desire of profiting by your neighbour's loss, it is so far an *approach*. There are different degrees of vice, no doubt; but we are cautioned against breaking one of the *least commandments*, as well as the greatest. The good Christian endeavours to preserve his mind from the smallest taint; and the Christian minister thinks himself particularly bound to abstain from every *appearance of evil*.—In fine, I will not cavil with you, whether playing for money arises from avarice; but certainly the *amusement* ceases, when it cannot itself produce its end; and *what does produce*

duce the end, becomes the leading principle. So that the point issues here: if you choose such feeble amusements, as are really no amusements, without the aid of vicious stimulatives—it becomes you to lay them aside; and seek for such amusements, as are simply such.

To be candid, I replied, I have nothing farther, Sir, to oppose. Vicious custom, I fear, hath modified all our amusements, as well as every thing else; and hath driven them from their natural simplicity; connecting things with them, that have no relation to them. I cannot but allow,

with you, that amusements should be simply such ; and that if they connect themselves with money, they should assume another name.—I then put the Dean in mind, that he had yet furnished us with no *domestic amusement*, that came under the name of *exercise*. Rainy weather, I observed, might continue so long, as to make a little motion necessary to a sedentary man. Do you object to billiards ?

Why no, said the Dean, not much. My own method, when I could not take exercise abroad, was to throw two or three doors open, and walk from one chamber to another, with a book,

book, or scrap of paper in my hand, as I used to do in the fields. But I do not prescribe my own example to others. As to billiards, they are so unhappily connected with gaming, and bad company, that I have no great respect for the amusement—at least as a clerical one. However, as the influence of this game, from its expensive apparatus, cannot be so extended as cards, I should not object to a clergyman's playing at it in a private family, and under the usual restriction of playing only with good company, and for no stake.

I am obliged to you, said I, Sir,

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for

for the liberty you have given me of indulging an amusement, which is a favourite one with me; and in which I am supposed to have some skill.

Nay then, replied the Dean, I know not whether I shall not revoke the liberty I have given you. I am not fond of a clergyman's *possessing skill* in any game. Skill always implies a consumption of time; and an eagerness after an amusement, which I cannot approve.

But you have now, said I, Sir, given me so much good instruction, that,

whatever I may have done, I hope never again either to employ my time in improving my skill; or to use my skill in mispending my time.—I then asked the Dean, if he had ever heard of the game of shuttlecock? or if he would laugh at me for mentioning it to him as good *domestic exercise*?

Laugh at you! said the Dean; I know no game, that I value more. It has all the characters of the amusement, we want. It gives us good exercise—it makes us cheerful—and has no connection with our pockets: and if I may whisper another truth in your ear, it does not require *much skill*
to

to learn. When my legs were in better order, I have spent many a rainy half-hour with Sir Roger, at shuttlecock in his hall. The worst of it is, few parsonage houses have a room large enough for it; though perhaps the tithe-barn, if it be not better employed, may furnish one.— I could say more in favour of shuttlecock. You may play at it alone. It is also an exercise too violent to last long. We need not fear, as at billiards, to mispend a morning at it.—Laugh at you! so far from it, that I respect the man, who invented shuttlecock.

I asked

I asked the Dean next, if he had any objection to some little handicraft business, as *domestic exercise* for a clergyman? And I particularised that of a carpenter, or a turner; both which, I said, were very well fitted to put the blood in motion.

Aye, aye, replied the Dean, I like them both. I have known very worthy clergymen good carpenters, and turners. I knew one, who had a shop in his house, and made his own tables and chairs. They were substantial, and not ill-made; though he did not think them neat enough for his parlour, they did very well for his
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chambers, and study. I knew another clergyman, added the Dean, and an exemplary man he was, who was an excellent turner. He used to work in box, ebony, and ivory; and made a number of little, pretty conveniences both for himself, and his friends. In the coldest weather, I have heard him say, he could put his whole frame in a glow by working his lathe.—Did not you see in the prints, that Monf. Pascal, who died the other day, had retired, a few years ago, to the learned feminary of Port-Royal, where he, and other eminent men made it a rule to intermix their studies with manual labour?

I told

I told the Dean I had seen it; and that I rather wondered at the choice, which Pascal had made of his own employment, which was that of making wooden shoes.

Aye, good man, said the Dean, he made them for the poor peasants in his neighbourhood; and I should be glad to give more than double their value for a pair of them to keep for his sake.

I then mentioned book-binding to the Dean, as a clerical art.

Why, yes, said he, I think it is:
but

but we should have introduced it earlier in our conversation, under the head of *domestic amusement*; it will hardly come under that of *domestic exercise*.—Well, have you any thing more to offer? You see, I am disposed to allow my brethren every mode of amusement, and exercise, that is consistent with innocence, and propriety of manners; and I hope the range which may be taken within these bounds, will be thought fully sufficient. If I have omitted any thing; or if you have any thing farther to propose, let me know.

I recollect nothing, said I, Sir, at present;

present; and have only left to express my grateful obligations to you for what is past. If any thing farther should occur, I shall take the liberty, on some future occasion, to propose it. In the mean time, I am perfectly satisfied myself with the indulgence you have given me; and should think any of my brethren unreasonable, who should desire more.

END OF THE DIALOGUES.

THIS is the substance of what passed between the Dean of Paul's, and me, on the subject of clerical amusements. As
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our conversation lasted three evenings, I had the more leisure to commit it to writing. The force of many of the Dean's expressions, I fear, is injured in an account, which depended so much on memory: but I dare take upon me to say, the sentiments are invariably his.

As this conversation gave a new turn to all my own amusements, it enabled me also to be of some service in giving occasional advice to several of my younger brethren: and if my executors should find these papers, and think them worth communicating to the public, I should hope they might be of use also to others, after I am gone. 4 JY 66

JOS. FRAMPTON.

THE END.